

New-York Weekly Museum.

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From the LOUNGER.

History of Sophia M——, a wife seduced by her husband.

To the Author of the Lounger.

SIR,

MY father possessed a small patrimonial estate in the county of —, and married, in early life, a Lady whose birth was much above her fortune, and who unluckily retained all the pride of the first, though it but ill suited the circumstances of the latter. The consequences were such as might naturally be looked for. My father was involved in an expensive style of life, which in a few years obliged him to sell his estate for payment of his debts. He did not live to feel the distresses to which he might have been reduced; and after his death my mother took up her residence in a country town, where the pittance that remained from the reversion of my father's effects, assisted by a small pension from government, which a distant relation of my mother's procured for us, enabled her to educate me on that sober plan which necessity had now taught her to adopt.

Of my beauty I was, like other girls, somewhat vain; but my mother was proud to an extreme degree. She looked upon it as a gift by which my fortune and hers were to be made, and consequently spared no possible pains to set it off to advantage.

These hopes, however, accident put it in her power to accomplish. At the house of one of the gentlest of our acquaintance (who had two daughters nearly of my age) we met with Mr M——, a gentleman whom the lady of the house introduced particularly to us, as a man of great fortune and singular worth. Mr M—— was past the meridian of life; he had the look and air of a man who had seen the world, and talked on most subjects with a degree of shrewd, and often farcastic observation, which met with much applause from the older part of the company, but which was not at all calculated to please the younger. The enthusiasm of attachment, of feeling, and of virtue, which our reading sometimes induced us to mention, he ridiculed as existing only in the dreams of poetry, or the fanciful heroes of romance; but which sense and experience neither looked to find in others, nor ventured to indulge in ourselves. In short, my companions and I hated and feared him; and neither our aversion or our fear was at all removed by the lectures of our mothers on his good sense and agreeable manners.

These lectures were at last bestowed with particular emphasis on me, and, after a day or two's preamble of general commendations, he was formally proposed to me by my mother as a husband. He himself, though he made his court chiefly to her, was now pretty sedulous in his attentions to me; and made many speeches to my beauty, and protestations of his love, which I heard with little emotion, but which my mother, and her friends whose guests we were, represented as the genuine expressions of the most sincere and ardent attachment. Of love I had formed some ideas as girls of my age generally do; and though I had no particular preference for any one, yet I had not

hesitate in refusing him, for whom I had hitherto conceived nothing but disgust. My refusal increased the ardour of my lover in his suit: to me he talked in common-place language of the anguish it caused him; to my mother he spoke in the language of the world, and increased his offers in point of settlement to an exorbitant degree. Her influence was proportionally exerted. She persuaded, implored, and was angry. The luxury and happiness of that state which I might acquire were warmly painted; the folly, the impiety, of depriving myself and her of so comfortable an establishment, was strongly held forth; the good qualities and generosity of Mr M—— were expatiated on; those ideas which I ventured to plead as reasons for my rejection were ridiculed and exploded. — At my time of life, unused to resistance, fond of my mother, and accustomed to be guided by her; perhaps, too, somewhat dazzled with the prospect of the situation which this marriage would open to me; it is not surprising that my first resolutions were overcome. I became the wife of Mr M——.

For some time the happiness they had promised seemed to attend me. My husband was warm, if not tender in his attachment; my wishes for myself were not only indulged, but prompted; and his kindness to my mother and my friends was unbounded. I was grateful to Mr M——, I regarded, I esteemed, I wished to love him. On the birth of a son, which happened about a year after our marriage, he redoubled his assiduities about me. I was more happy, more grateful; I looked on my boy, his father caressed him; and then it was that I loved Mr M—— indeed.

This happiness, however, it was not my good fortune long to enjoy. Some projects of political ambition, in which Mr M—— was engaged, called him from those domestic enjoyments which seemed for a while to have interested him, into more public life. We took up our residence in the capital, and Mr M—— introduced me to what is called the best company. Of his own society I soon came to enjoy but little. His attachment for me began visibly to decay, and by degrees he lost altogether the attentions which for a while outlived it. Sullen and silent when we are alone, and either neglectful or contemptuous when we had company, he treated me as one whom it would have degraded him to love or to respect; whom it was scarce worth while to hate or to despise. I was considered as merely a part of his establishment; and it was my duty to do the honours of his table, as it was that of his butler to attend to his side-board, or of his groom to take care of his horses. Like them too, I was to minister to his vanity, by the splendor of my appearance; I was to shew that beauty of which he was master, in company and at public places, and was to carry the trappings with which he had adorned it, to be envied by the poor, and admired by the wealthy. Young, giddy, and fond of amusement, I at last began to enjoy the part he assigned me, and entered warmly into that round of dissipation, which for a while I had passed through without

For a considerable time, however, a sense of right, which I had imbibed in my infancy, rose up occasionally to embitter my pleasures, and to make me ashamed of the part I was acting. Whenever Mr M—— took the trouble of perceiving this, it served him but as a subject for ridicule. The restraints of religion, or nice morality, he was at pains to represent as the effects of fanaticism and pedantry; and when I seemed surprised or shocked at the principles he held forth, he threw in a sneer at my former situation, and hinted, that but for him I had been still the awkward ignorant thing he found me.

Yet this man expected that I should be virtuous, as that word is used by the world; that I should guard that honour which was his, while every other principle of my own rectitude was extinguished. For a long time it was so. My horror at that degree of depravity was not to be overcome, even amidst the levity, to call it no worse, of manners which I saw continually around me, and which, as a mark of fashion, he wished me to participate. Still in the possession of youth and beauty, I did not escape solicitations; but I repelled them with a degree of resentment, which I often heard the very man whose honour it guarded treat as affectation in any woman who should pretend it. He would frequently repeat from the Letters of Lord Chesterfield, that a declaration of love to a woman was always to be ventured, because, even though it was rejected, she would accept of it as a compliment to her attractions. I had soon opportunities of knowing that Mr M—— was as loose in his practice as in his principles. His infidelities, indeed, he was not at much pains to conceal; and while I continued to upbraid him, was at almost as little pains to excuse.

In such circumstances, was it to be wondered at if my virtue was not always proof against the attacks to which it was exposed? — Was it wonderful, that thus situated, exposed to temptation, and unguarded by principle, I should forget first the restraints of prudence, and then the obligations of virtue?

Resigned as I now am to my situation, I can look on it as a kind interposition of Providence, that detection soon followed my first deviation from virtue, before I had lost the feelings of remorse and contrition, before I had wandered an veritable distance from duty, from principle, religion.

Humbled, and I trust improved by affliction, will not indulge either vindication or resentment. The injuries I have done my husband I am willing to expiate (as, alas! he knows I do) by penitence and by suffering; yet, for his own sake, and for the warning of others, let me ask him, if, for these injuries to him, and sufferings to me, he never imputes any blame to himself? I am told he is loud in his charges of my ingratitude and perfidy. I again repeat, that I will not offer to apologize for my weakness or my crimes. But it would be more dignified in him, as well as more just, were he to forget rather than to reproach the woman whose person he bought, whose affections he despised, whose innocence he corrupted, — whose ruin he has

The real GENTLEMAN described.

A Real gentleman is certainly a most amiable character; but as that word is promiscuously applied, and generally understood, it as certainly often implies such qualities as are rather a reproach to the possessor, than any marks of intrinsic merit.

Any man, of whatever station, who with natural good sense, possesses also an honest heart, and who has these essentials polished by a sweetness of behaviour, which is better understood than expressed; this man is the *true gentleman*, whether he be a knight or a ticket-porter; a lord, or a journeyman taylor. Acquired accomplishments adorn, but do not constitute the gentleman.

It is true, a person runs a great risk of disappointment who should search for gentlemen among working bricklayers, smiths, and men in other laborious professions; since in those employments the mind being chained to the contemplation of the objects of their industry, is necessarily very narrow; since it contracts a rigidity or rust for want of extension, or by associating with the depraved is too often vitiated itself. There is no rule without exceptions, however seldom they appear, and true genius will burst through all those obstacles which overpower little minds, and choke upon ordinary capacities.

The acquirements of mankind, it is true, differ generally in proportion as their situation is more or less prosperous: thus many a good understanding is uncultivated, and many a head is filled with the sciences to as little purpose as if they were stuffed with saw-dust. But whether that be the case or not, due allowance ought to be made for the disadvantages of a confined sphere of activity. Let the readers of Sir Charles Grandison only change his situation, and conceive him with a leather apron about him; the consequence would be that a great part of those bright qualities they admire in the man of fortune, would not appear, but lie dormant in the shoemaker, merely for want of opportunities for exertion. There are men in all degrees of life who merit the appellation of *gentlemen*.



The UNFEELING FATHER.

A FRAGMENT.

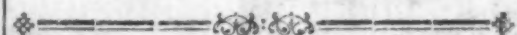
***** DOES nature refuse to plead for me (said Miranda kneeling before him) or does she plead in vain? You broke the sacred bonds of nature, said the old man, when you left a father's fond protection, and a mother's tender care, to pursue the fortune of the only man on earth whom they detested. An heavenly father, exclaimed Miranda, forgives the sins of his children: and shall an earthly parent withhold the charitable boon a repentant child demands from him? To that heavenly father then, replied I recommend you; my doors are no longer open to receive you; I have made a vow which shall never be broken. Let the friends of your husband protect his darling—you are mine no more. But these children, Sir! Alas! what have they done? Leave me to the cruel fate that awaits me, but suffer them not to perish.

They are none of mine, said the stern parent, I will never press them in my arms, they will never sit upon my knees, I will foster no more ingratitude, let him who begot them take the spade and mattock, and get them bread. No office is beneath the affection of a parent, when children have not been ungrateful—I am yours no more.

This was the fatal dialogue between Miranda and her father, in the porch of his house, for she

against her, and retired to his chamber. The wind blew, and the rain beat hard, and she dared not encounter the tempest, she remained in the porch—pressed her shivering babes to her bosom, and hoped that the morning's dawn would bring mercy along with it. But when the morning dawned she was no more!—The servants found her a clay cold corpse, and the two children weeping beside it.

When Molvolio was called to see the spectacle he sunk down on the floor; life indeed, returned, but peace abandoned him forever. He loves the children, but says, Heaven, in all its stores of mercies, has not one for him.



Foreign Intelligence.

LONDON, Dec. 12.

Extract of a letter from Dublin, Dec. 2.

"The public may rely on the following being an undoubted fact:—There is a respectable gentleman, an eminent practitioner in the four courts, and now in perfect health, who is the father of 38 children, born in wedlock, out of which a amazing number twenty six are still living, six of whom are married and have children."

Extract of a letter from Constantinople Oct. 1.

"The Divan are in the greatest perplexity concerning the question, whether they shall make a winter campaign or not? Some members being for it, while others are of opinion that such a campaign will hinder the Ottoman troops from continuing the war with vigour during the next summer. Besides the Grand Vizir's army is too much weakened by the retreat of the Asiatic troops; and should they even raise recruits enough; which is not very likely, they could not arrive at the army before the winter, and then would not be disciplined, or fit for service.

"Nothing is talked of at present at Pera and Constantinople but the last dispatches sent to court by the Grand Vizir, dated Mehadia, September 16, by which that minister informs the Porte the position of the two armies, and advanced post of which were in sight of each other, and of all which had passed from the beginning of the month till that time. What most sets the Sultan and the ministry against the Grand Vizir, is the position of the Ottoman army: which according to his own account, was at that time hemmed in between a long chain of inaccessible mountains, and unable to employ all its forces to any advantage. The inquietude which this occasions is augmented by the account which the Grand Vizir adds to his relation concerning the loss of a large body of his troops two days before, owing to the two Pachas leading them against the enemy without previously reconnoitering their position. All these had accounts received by the court at a time when they expected to hear of a general invasion of the enemy's country joined to worse accounts from Moldavia, where they look upon the loss of Choczim as inevitable, and from Bosnia, where the success of Marshal Laudon has occasioned the greatest alarms, have caused his highness to order a conference between his ministers, at which he himself assisted in person."

No new minister is yet appointed from the French court to the States of Holland.

Mr Woodford has nearly concluded the substance of the commercial treaty with Spain, which Mr Edea is negotiating at Madrid.

The most alarming divisions prevail among different orders of the French nation, who bear the most inveterate hatred to each other. In fact,

American Intelligence.

BOSTON, February 10.

Capt. Edmund Howes, of this town, lately received the following intelligence, which he was requested to communicate to the public.

SIR,

YOU are desired to publish in the papers, that the schooner Nancy, said to be taken from Mr. Solomon Ashley, in a piratical manner on the coast of Virginia, as mentioned in the papers the beginning of last month, is stopped, and the vessel and cargo, (at least that part which has not been disposed of) is taken care of, and the men committed to jail. The vessel and cargo answers the descriptions which have been given, except some matters relating to the cargo which the men have sold. The persons taken in the vessel, call their names James Brown, and William Davis. The vessel is now in the Old Harbor of Chatham, in the county of Barnstable.

We, the subscribers have examined the above mentioned men, and committed them as aforesaid.

JOSEPH DOANE.

JOSEPH SNOW.

N. B. The vessel and cargo is in the care of the said Joseph Doane, at Chatham.

S A L E M, February 3.

However extraordinary may be its appearance, we have it from indisputable veracity, that a lad being on the ice in North-river a day or two ago, for diversion, unluckily fell through; but that a man, farther down, then engaged in eeling, knowing nothing of the fate of the lad, almost miraculously struck his spear into his clothing, and unhurt, fished him back into the world from his watery habitation.

One morning last week, while a family in this town were breakfasting, a child between two and three years of age, taking hold of a coffee-pot, on the table, turned the scalding liquid over it, to such a degree, that it terminated its innocent life in a few hours. These, with a number of other, similar casualties, persuasively admonish parents and all intrusted with the care of children, that they never, perhaps, can be over cautious in regarding their goings, or can too carefully eye them in all their ways.

LITCHFIELD, Feb. 9.

We learn from the commonwealth of Massachusetts, that a transient gentleman, having alighted at an Inn, about dusk, had his horse stolen: The brute immediately missing his better self, pursued and speedily overtook the thief, who dismounted and fled into an adjacent wood, but he not being swift of foot, was captured. The fellow returned, and reported, that he had tied the thief to a tree; and begging the Tavern-keeper not to unloose him till morning, departed: The thief being unpitied and unsought that night, was found dead, tied about the neck to a limb of a tree, with a halter;—and neither the unhappy sufferer or executioner are known.—Tho' honesty is the best policy; yet converts to the doctrine ought not to be made by violating the laws of society and the rights of humanity.

RICHMOND, January 15.

Saturday se'night Mr. Turnbull and his son from Petersburg, having taken lodgings at a tavern in Williamsburg, were robbed by two men who came to the same house about two o'clock the preceding evening, on pretence of getting lodg-



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